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Revolution in Military Manpower:  
The “Citizen-Warrior” Total Career Continuum Construct

by

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## **Biography**

Lieutenant Colonel Loretta Lombard is a Florida Air National Guard officer experienced in Meteorology, Cyberspace Operations and Personnel Management assigned to the Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL. A prior-enlisted Air Force Master Sergeant, Colonel Lombard was commissioned in 1991 as a Distinguished Graduate of the Academy of Military Science, McGhee-Tyson ANGB. She holds an Associates of Applied Science-Weather Technology degree from the Community College of the Air Force, a Bachelors of Science in Management degree from Lesley College, Cambridge, and a Masters of Business Administrations with Strategic Leadership concentration from Western Governors University, Salt Lake City. As a traditional Guard member, she managed communications technology technical support, quality assurance testing, and technical documentation for hardware and software companies in Massachusetts and Washington states. Colonel Lombard served as the first full-time Commandant of the Weather Readiness Training Center as a dual-status civil-service technician at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, Florida. She commanded for over six years as an AGR supporting the Joint Communications Support Element on MacDill AFB. Colonel Lombard has been activated to OCONUS federal service four times in support of Operations ALLIED FORCE KOSOVO, IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

## **Abstract**

This paper argues that a citizen-based, modified and extended service career model will enhance capabilities, adaptability, and community relations, and serve as a more effective structure for long-term force management. Expanding upon the Total Force Policy and Continuum of Service Concept, this proposal recommends inverting the force to a citizen-based force that is reorganized to serve in an Active (State or National and Global Operational) status or Reserve (Domestic and Strategic Support) status. The force is initially trained in active status and then either serves state or federal active force needs or returns to reserve status for state or federal reserve force needs. Personnel would transition back and forth between active and reserve status throughout an extended career culminating in a traditional, civilian-style retirement at the nationally recognized retirement age. Active, full-time personnel would train, equip, and sustain personnel, or serve operational requirements. Concurrent with the transitioning statuses, the career timeline would be extended beyond twenty years to create a lifetime career that removes the “2<sup>nd</sup> career” of current military personnel. Historical foundations, barriers and workarounds, demographic challenges, and the dual-status technician program are elements in the analysis. A comparison of current active and reserve retirement systems with the Total Career Continuum retirement completes the presentation of the proposal. Impact of the proposal upon retention and operational effectiveness, along with incentives of a community-based force is presented prior to the conclusion.

## Introduction

*While the senior leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs reflect on the past, they are compelled to develop a fresh national security strategy to meet the continuing threat of terrorism and a world being reshaped by new players and new dynamics. In its current form, the force has become unaffordable...Nonetheless; our nation deserves a modern, balanced and ready defense. The big question is, how does the department reduce its budget and continue to provide a modern, balanced and ready defense when more than half of the budget is committed to personnel costs?...The answer to that question is right before us: We should return to our historic roots as a militia nation...Simply put, it means we should return to the constitutional construct for our military and the days when we maintained a smaller standing military and a robust militia ...This concept worked well for our country for the better part of two centuries...We need our collective senior military and civilian leaders to recognize there is a way back to a smaller active military and a larger militia posture. The fiscal environment and emerging threats demand it.*

*General (Retired) Ron Fogelman, former Chief of Staff,  
United States Air Force, January 2012<sup>1</sup>*

The military system in the United States dates back over 448 years.<sup>2</sup> The Second Congress passed the United States Militia Act in 1792, and in 1903 the force became known as the National Guard. At the start, there were few statuses – active, training, and inactive reserve. Although the U.S. Army claims the birthdate of June 14, 1775, the nation did not retain a continuous standing army until 1791.<sup>3</sup> The Navy was established in 1794, and the Reserves instituted in the amended National Defense Act in 1920.<sup>4</sup> Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird announced the "Total Force Concept" August 21, 1970, which required active and reserve military organizations be treated as a single integrated force.<sup>5</sup> The implementation of the Total Force Policy (TFP) of 1973 echoed the original intentions of the founding fathers for a small standing army complemented by citizen-soldiers.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the nation has relied upon the National Guard and Reserves to fight wars and armed conflicts, thwart terrorists, provide peace-keeping and nation-building efforts, serve counter-drug operations, and responded to domestic and international emergencies.

In January 2012, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta issued strategic guidance for the force to be “smaller and leaner, but ...agile, flexible, ready and technologically advanced”.<sup>7</sup> In the minds of military leaders, strategists, and Congress, as the budget becomes top priority the question is: How do we best retain primacy in military power on a limited budget? Is it really smaller and leaner? Panetta suggests moving from doing “more with less” to doing “less with less” without considering doing “less with more potential”. The complexity of achieving the goal within the current construct forces consideration of a drastic shift in the paradigm.

Although it appears the Services have made significant progress towards full implementation of the TFP, in reality, the change has only begun. With current fiscal constraints, the question is raised: Does the twenty-year active career best serve the nation and defense needs? The 2008 Commission on the Guard and Reserve recommended the reserve forces be reorganized into two categories, the Operational Reserve Force and the Strategic Reserve Force.<sup>8</sup> In recent years, the DoD has investigated a number of structures and retirement options, most of which struggle with the funding-versus-forces dilemma. The current U.S. military career system of limited entry-point, up-or-out advancement, and all-or-nothing twenty-year active retirement, is unsustainable and requires radical revision to a more historical structure to remain a viable demonstration of projection of power for future National Defense and Homeland Security Strategy priorities.

When the DoD first “operationalized” the Reserves in 1991 after the Gulf War, it took the first steps toward a return to the militia construct by regularly integrating significant numbers of citizen-warriors into the active force and returning them to civilian status upon completion of their assigned duty to maintain skills and readiness in reserve status. Now, budgetary constraints and declining missions demand a reduction in active forces.

This paper argues a citizen-based, modified and extended service career model will enhance capabilities, adaptability, and community relations, and serve as a more effective structure for long-term force management. Expanding upon the TFP and CoS Concept, this proposal recommends inverting the force to a citizen-based force reorganized to serve in an Active (State or National and Global Operational) status or Reserve (Domestic and Strategic Support) status.<sup>9</sup> The force is initially trained in active status and then either serves state or federal active force needs or returns to reserve status for state or federal reserve force needs. Members would transition back and forth between active and reserve status throughout an extended career culminating in a traditional, civilian-style retirement at the nationally recognized retirement age.<sup>10</sup> Active, full-time personnel would train, equip, and sustain personnel, or serve operational requirements. Concurrent with the transitioning statuses, the career timeline would be extended beyond twenty years to create a lifetime career removing the “2<sup>nd</sup> career” of current military personnel.

Numerous past and current proposals within DoD have skirted this idea – operationalizing the National Guard and Reserves through mobilization rotations, active/reserve aligned or associate units, blended units, and proposing contributory retirement options. This investigation assesses the alternative of a life-long service career that includes transitions between active and reserve (National Guard or Reserve) status.<sup>11</sup> A cursory discussion of evolutionary elimination of the Dual-status Technician Program is briefly included as an optimization benefit of the Total Career Continuum paradigm.

# **From Total Force & Continuum of Service to Total Continuum Career**

## **Historical Foundations**

Many believe the U.S. military career and retirement system have been unchanging from the start. In reality, they have been in continuous adaptation and are trending back to their earlier form. The first step back towards our roots as a militia nation was the TFP of 1973. Twenty-eight years later, the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review outlined a new initiative referred to as the “Continuum of Service” (CoS). This initiative envisioned movement between the full and part-time components and minimizing hardships on military personnel caused by barriers in legislation, regulation and policy. The U.S. government has made little progress implementing the CoS concept and still lacks a comprehensive personnel-management strategy. Moreover, little has changed in promotion policies and excessive duty statuses that disrupt successful receipt of pay, benefits and health care by Guardsmen and Reservists.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the Services have yet to provide incentives for personnel to transition to reserve status with intent of returning to active status. Instead, initiatives like sabbaticals and AF Career Intermission Program have provided for time off active-duty to deconflict personal/family lives and careers for short-term conflicts or long-term basis.<sup>13</sup> Programs within the Services such as emergency leave, convalescent leave, humanitarian reassignment, and educational leave of absence also exist yet are insufficient for the spectrum of circumstances.

The proposed model allows Congress to establish fixed end-strength for the total force (National Guard and Reserve) and a subset quantity of forces to operate in active status to meet combatant commander operational requirements.<sup>14</sup> The quantity of personnel in active status would be reduced to essential levels and can modulate to meet the projected needs without requiring recruiting pushes or Reduction in Force (RIF) actions that necessitate accession,



separation, or early retirement incentives. Personnel, upon nearing completion of their current tour of duty, will either renew for a subsequent tour or PCS to reserve status.<sup>15</sup> A Total Force manpower management team can oversee force requirement projections and perform actions necessary to maintain manning of active requirements.<sup>16</sup> Fully implementing the TFP and CoS concepts through a Total Career Continuum provides for experience in both full and part-time realms of service. All personnel expand their understanding and experience in active service and within civilian occupations bringing full-spectrum capabilities within both realms. Further progress on the continuum toward an enterprise-wide approach to a broad portfolio of military manpower capabilities with versatility across the range of missions is in the best interest of our nation's defense.

### **Barriers and Workarounds**

By focusing primarily on active force exigencies, arguments about barriers and complications in managing reserve forces were driven to lower priority and compounded to create the impression the Reserves are difficult to access for operational requirements. The reserve forces consist of seven organizations: Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserves, Air Force Reserves, Navy Reserves, Marine Corps Reserves, and Coast Guard Reserves which total less than half of the U.S. military manpower.<sup>17</sup> The reserve forces provide trained units and qualified personnel in time of war or national emergency and when required for augmentation of operational forces. In fact, the reserve forces have been an integral component of the Total Force with their participation shifting with the ebb and flow of National Security Strategy implementation and executive decisions on international engagements. For example, workarounds for roles of active and reserve forces in domestic response and *posse comitatus*

restrictions, or the creation of Contingency Dual-Status Commanders and NORAD air sovereignty “instantly converting” Title 32/10 orders, add complexity that would be avoided by streamlining the force model.<sup>18</sup> Notably, those proposals and workarounds remain restricted by the dependence on the majority force in a full-time active-duty career paradigm. In addition, funding and appropriations restrictions raise the issues to even higher levels of bewilderment. Even though active personnel must train for their duty specialties in addition to performing operational duties, reserve personnel are seen as violating the purpose of funding by performing training activities, even over weekends, when on active orders.<sup>19</sup> The “color of money” hinders the ability to efficiently utilize time and resources to improve or maintain readiness. These restrictions in appropriations compel movement between statuses for access to training, schools, professional military education, or voluntary deployments and duties to enhance capabilities. This inhibits having the best qualified and mission-ready workforce for the nation’s requirements.<sup>20</sup> The systems, laws and policies creating barriers and complications in managing Reserves must become priority for improvement to avoid exponential increases in issues with more Reserves.

### **Second-Career Differential versus Lifetime-Career Pension**

Current active-duty service assumes continuous participation for twenty years followed by a transition to a civilian “2<sup>nd</sup> Career” where the immediate military annuity offsets a supposed civilian income deficit of late entry into the marketplace. Although this assumption is valid in some cases, an increasing number of military personnel, especially officers, which comprise the majority of retiring personnel, remain in government-related service by transitioning to civil-service, contract, or civilian-sector consultation or lobby positions that continue or increase their

income level while concurrently collecting military retirement pay. This increasing category of second careers is one reason the military retirement receives scrutiny. In contrast, this proposal theorizes one career and retirement system for all military service that incorporates civilian and military periods which culminates in a pension accumulated over an extended eligibility period with payout at civilian retirement age would be viewed as more equitable and retain access to valued, vital capabilities within a larger pool of resources at mid-career and senior management levels. What began as a disability or old-age pension ultimately became viewed as a “second-career salary subsidy” after the 1969 Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, and ever since, the twenty-year retirement pension is being attacked by cost-savings seekers.<sup>21</sup>

### **The Twenty-year Retirement**

The twenty-year career goes back to 13 B.C. when Augustus offered legionnaires pension for service during Rome’s frontier campaigns.<sup>22</sup> After the Civil War, President Lincoln persuaded Congress to pass the first army retirement law for officers after forty years of service. Further modifications in 1870 and 1882 revised it to thirty years minimum service for 75% base pay and mandatory retirement at age sixty-four. In 1920, Congress established the “up-or-out” policy, and in 1924 the service requirement was reduced to twenty years.<sup>23</sup> In fact, the initial Army and Navy pension systems predate the U.S. Constitution and were primarily disability plans which liberally defined disability to include inability to perform regular duty due to infirmities associated with old age. Eventually, veteran pensions became old-age pensions consistent with broader social trends. In other words, the current retirement system is the foundation of the military compensation system and focuses on smooth promotion flow, force shaping, and preserving a young force with required skills. In fact, it is also a retention tool

retaining mid-career personnel to the twenty-year point, and provides an immediate annuity from date of retirement. During extreme force restructuring, early retirement authorization is provided for as little as fifteen years of service with immediate annuity. Finally, high-year-of-tenure rules require service members to reach E5 to be eligible for pension, and to retire when they reach a specified number of years in service at each higher grade (maximum thirty years for E9).

Officers have statutory service limits by pay-grade, regardless of their physical age. As a result, the majority of active-duty retirees are officers and enlisted members of the highest, most expensive ranks who receive military annuity payments for nearly half of their working lives.

As an alternative, under the Total Career Continuum personnel would accrue credit for service in both active and reserve status towards a single, common retirement annuity. Details of the program are beyond the scope of this proposal but may include establishing a minimum credit amount to incentivize minimum service for eligibility to retirement payments and a grandfather option to keep faith with military members who joined with expectations of a twenty-year career. Incentives to transition to the new Total Career Continuum system could be offered for members wishing to transition to reserve status and for those desiring the option to continue their service beyond the current timeline limitations. Complexities like the current reduction in retirement effective-date for reservists that serve ninety-day active-duty deployment increments since 2008 would be unnecessary under the Total Career Continuum system since all personnel would accrue retirement credit under the same conditions and standards.

## **Demographic Challenges**

The Services are challenged with accessing sufficient recruits from decreasing eligible American youth population. According to the Census Bureau, the “working age” population in

the U.S. will decline to fifty-seven percent of the population by 2050.<sup>24</sup> Of that, a significant portion is ineligible for military service due to medical limitations, obesity, legal violations, drug use, educational deficiencies, and other disqualifying factors. As the pool shrivels, the Services must retain qualified personnel longer to meet operational and surge requirements. The Reserves recruit half their members directly into their ranks in addition to gaining members separating from active service. These recruits recognize the value of military training and service, are patriotic, and understand the requirement to balance military and civilian careers from the day of accession through retirement. In contrast, only 2% of the Air Force population transition to the National Guard and Reserves upon separation. The other Services have similar transition rates. Active personnel transitioning to the Guard and Reserves seek to prolong their military careers, advance in grade and experience, and eventually earn sufficient credit for retirement benefits. Revision to a Total Career Continuum system reformulates reserve status as the norm and retains larger numbers of trained personnel who pursue civilian careers while remaining available to fulfill national security taskings for the majority of their working lives.

### **End Dual-Status Civil-Service Technicians**

Dual-status Technicians were established by the National Guard Technicians Act of 1968 to provide federally funded full-time personnel for operational requirements in reserve units.<sup>25</sup> The dedicated technicians serve in exemplary manner and provide long-term consistent skills and experience. Unfortunately, the program also increases the force management complexity and underscores inequities in operating conditions, restrictions, and benefits working alongside Active-Guard-Reserve personnel (AGRs), sometimes performing identical duties under totally different compensation programs.<sup>26</sup> Dual-status technicians must hold commensurate military

billets and retain readiness standards to remain employed. An accident or injury that results in loss of their military billet also results in loss of their full-time livelihood and insurance coverage even if the technician is still capable of performing his/her technician duties. Past studies, Congressional initiatives, and current investigation by the Commission on the Guard and Reserve support consideration of modifications to the Dual-status Technician program to resolve inequities and issues like the impact of government furloughs on mission support.<sup>27</sup> Reduction of active authorizations can transition funding providing one-for-one replacement of dual-status authorizations with active-reserve authorizations, thus eventually eliminating the dual-status program, problems and related expenses entirely. Some positions can also be evaluated for non-dual-status civil-service conversion, if the duties do not require military-deployment-duty performance, and thus remove the complexity and risk related to readiness requirements. Detailed cost-benefit analysis and conversion planning are beyond the scope of this paper but are likely to validate the benefit of consolidation and streamlining the force in this area.

### **Comparison of Current Military Career and Total Continuum Career**

The current active military career is claimed to be “arguably the best retirement deal around” by Military.com.<sup>28</sup> The current Reserve retirement system is different, and a comparison of both to the Total Career Continuum retirement system is presented in this section. To begin with, many factors are involved in determining any of the pensions.<sup>29</sup> Briefly presented, active-duty retirement is based on a minimum of twenty years of continuous service and is determined by the date entered service, highest grade held for Final Pay system, and time in highest grades for High 36 system. A third option is Career Status Bonus/REDUX that provides a lump sum payout at fifteen years of service to offset a reduced percentage annuity

until age sixty.

In contrast, reserve members must complete a minimum of twenty “qualifying” years to become eligible for retirement annuity at age sixty. A qualifying year requires at least fifty points earned through inactive-duty training, reserve membership, equivalent instruction, and designated correspondence courses.<sup>30</sup> The maximum number of inactive points creditable per year has risen from sixty before 1997, to seventy-five through 2000, and is currently capped at ninety irrespective of the inactive points actually earned that year. Active service earns one point per day on orders to a maximum of 365 or 366 points per year.<sup>31</sup> The reservist must remember to apply for retirement within the year preceding eligibility to receive payments at age sixty. The Final Pay and High 36 systems apply to reservists, but Career Status Bonus/REDUX does not. Reservists are ineligible for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 authorization to exceed 75% of base pay for service beyond thirty years.

The Total Career Continuum retirement would be a point-based formula system, similar to the reserve system. A minimum point-level would be established, similar to a vesting period in civilian employment, which would include basic training and time to achieve sufficient training to be awarded a “qualified skill-level” in officer or enlisted training for the appropriate Service branch. This could vary based on operational specialty/specialty code or be a fixed number of days/years. Members accrue points for days of active service or active-reserve service (unit training, attending classes, etc.) and for designated correspondence courses or equivalent training performed on non-duty time when not already compensated with point credit for the days.<sup>32</sup> Point incentives could be integrated into retirement calculation formulas for hazardous duty, selective high-demand/low-density specialty skills, re-enlistments in stressed career-fields, professional military education, and other situations to provide additional

incentives for desired behaviors and force-shaping needs. The system could be adaptive to changing world security and domestic economic environments to ensure the nation retains access to the necessary capabilities and quantity of personnel to serve projected requirements. Once achieving qualified skill-level, personnel would serve tours of duty for a specified period of time in active or reserve status, transitioning at the end of the tour or continuing in current status for a subsequent tour. Tours would be determined by a combination of the Service's needs and the members' desires for active or reserve status. Members would understand the requirement to serve in both statuses throughout their career, but at no pre-defined amount of either except for initial training and any service obligation incurred for subsequent training or assignment.<sup>33</sup>

Annual performance evaluations, in addition to physical fitness standards and other specialty-unique requirements, would determine overall longevity in service. Since there will no longer be an "all-or-nothing" threshold for retirement, actual duty performance can be justification for denial of re-enlistment or revocation of commission to remove sub-standard performers and maintain a high-quality force. Removal of "up-or-out" would allow retention of high performing technical operators in mid-level grades for longer periods to increase the "stability advantage" currently accredited to the Guard and Reserve units, contractors or civil-service employees.<sup>34</sup>

Upon reaching retirement age, personnel receive annuity payouts based on accrued points and grade.<sup>35</sup> In any case, all military personnel will be compensated on the same formula and have served in both active and reserve statuses throughout their career, working until "true" retirement at the nationally established age at the time. As a result, the Total Career Continuum establishes an equitable career and retirement system that allows for flexible service, adaptability to national needs, negates the "2<sup>nd</sup> career" issue, and incorporates civilian experience and community investment in the sustainment of the world's premier military force. Members have input and



influence over the resultant annuity value by their choices and duration of statuses. They concurrently build retirement benefits in civilian employment/careers and create a clearer picture of their retirement income accrual. Next, we'll review other tangible and intangible benefits of the Total Career Continuum for the Services and members.

## **Retention and Operational Effectiveness**

Each service member is an autonomous rational actor with personal priorities that determine decision points for continuing or discontinuing active service. The primary window of decision for officer and enlisted members is between the fifth and eighth years of active service. The member has become fully qualified in his/her specialty skill and has most likely deployed one or more times. The complete loss of this experienced manpower represents a significant expense in recruiting, accession, training, and the value of their experience for developing junior personnel. Why do they leave and sacrifice retirement benefits? Upon review of studies and relevant literature on the question, some key findings are pertinent to this proposal. Personnel leave active service for more advancement, fulfillment, or pay in civilian careers; for geographical stability; to spend time with family or care for aging parents; and due to frustration or dissatisfaction with "the system". Additionally, females leave to start or raise families.<sup>36</sup> In surveys, personnel indicated "flexible job options and ability to move between active and reserve components" as the highest desired retention measure with "non-punitive breaks in service" and "home basing" closely following. The Total Career Continuum would meet these desires and possibly retain over fifty percent of the active force losses.<sup>37</sup> Transitioning those fully qualified members to reserve status will retain capabilities for future conflicts and other missions in a cost effective manner.

The FY2010 Quadrennial Defense Review recognized the value of the Reserves: “Over the past eight years, the National Guard and Reserves have consistently demonstrated their readiness and ability to make sustained contributions to ongoing operations... often serves at the forefront... At the same time, within this operational reserve, our nation must have a force generation model that provides sufficient strategic depth.”<sup>38</sup> The Operational Reserve Model, effectively utilized since 2001, serves as proof-of-concept for transition to a reserve-based construct. Multiple studies document no disparity in the readiness of the components. Both have common training standards, indistinguishable results supporting combatant commanders, and commensurate inspection results. These trained forces can continue to use the rotational model to bring individual manpower and units to active status to train, equip and sustain personnel, and to meet combatant commander operational requirements. Increasing the reserve force to be the majority, and source, of personnel provides: enhanced manpower flexibility, improved understanding of active and reserve status challenges and responsibilities, greater depth and breadth of experience and specialties, and fiscal efficiencies in retaining personnel.

### **Incentives of Community-based Force**

Retention of quality personnel in a reserve status provides operational and strategic benefits to the military while providing disciplined and diverse leaders and proven team players to civilian businesses. When active members transition to the Reserve, the government-funded training and tactical experience is employed within the civilian workforce while being preserved for future utilization in our nation’s service. Reserve members are integrated into communities and provide a daily visible and dynamic bond between the national military mission and the civilian community.

The ties between military community-relations and military effectiveness are overwhelmingly evident in studies and literature. Consistent with the Constitutional foundation of the citizen-servicemember, an enlarged reserve presence in every state will reduce the civilian-military gap, thus countering the increasing lack of civilian leadership with military experience that adversely affects decisions on use-of-force. The habitual relationships and regional expertise specific to long-term reserve unit operations designate them “force-of-choice” for enduring security, humanitarian, economic development and partnership missions. With only one percent of the population in active military service, the ability to influence public opinion and political powers is restricted. Active forces become isolated from general society. In contrast, reserve members are integrated into their community’s social structures increasing public awareness and trust of the military. Effective use of the National Guard in disaster response provides a level of compassion and reassurance that only a response from citizen-warriors who live in and around the community can provide.

The facts are:

- Reserve and Guard units are more geographically dispersed than active installations having access to all Congressional representatives to influence military-related political petitions.
- Reserve and Guard geographic dispersion dampens and distributes positive and negative effects throughout larger geographic areas as opposed to concentrated populations of active installation.
- Increased veterans and reserve members raise the proportion of public policy decision-makers and influencers with military experience or personal relationships.
- The positive image of reserve personnel encourages minorities and women to

investigate military service and exponentially multiply recruiting power.

- Guard response to regional and local disasters deepens the attachment to, and appreciation of, the military.

The Reserves bridge the American citizen with the active military and encourages an involved society.<sup>39</sup> A large Reserve provides the political incentive to produce citizens who personally care about the military and are more likely to participate in public debate, support funding, and have greater confidence in our national security policy.<sup>40</sup>



## Conclusion

The implementation of the TFP of 1973 echoed the original intentions of the founding fathers for a small standing army complemented by citizen-soldiers. The complexity of returning to our roots compels consideration of a drastic shift in paradigm. The current military career system is unsustainable and requires radical revision to remain a viable demonstration of projection of power for National Defense and Homeland Security priorities. Furthermore, the systems, laws and policies for managing reserve forces must become priority for improvement to avoid exponential increases in issues. The government has made little progress implementing the CoS concept and the Services have yet to provide incentives for personnel to transition to reserve status with intent of returning to active status. This paper argued that a citizen-based, modified and extended service career model enhances capabilities, adaptability, and community relations, and serves as a more efficient structure for long-term force management. Expanding upon the TFP and CoS Concepts, this proposal recommends inverting to a citizen-based force reorganized to serve in an Active status or Reserve status. Implementing the Total Career Continuum provides for experience in both full and part-time realms of service. All personnel experience active service and civilian occupations bringing full-spectrum capabilities within both realms. As an alternative to the current active-duty retirement, the Total Career Continuum retirement would be a point-based formula system, similar to the reserve system. Members accrue point-credit in both active and reserve status towards a single, common retirement annuity in a system adaptive to changing world security and domestic economic environments to ensure the nation retains access to capabilities and quantities of personnel to serve projected requirements. All personnel will be compensated on the same formula and serve in both active and reserve statuses throughout their career. The Total Career Continuum establishes an

equitable career and retirement system that allows for flexible service, negates the “2<sup>nd</sup> career” issue, and incorporates civilian experience and community investment in the sustainment of the world’s premier military force. Members have influence over the resultant annuity value through their choices and duration of statuses while concurrently building retirement benefits in civilian employment creating a clearer picture of their retirement income accrual.

The Services are already challenged with accessing sufficient recruits and must retain qualified personnel longer to meet operational and surge requirements. The Reserve recruits recognize the value of military training and service, are patriotic, and understand the requirement to balance military and civilian careers from the day of accession through retirement. Revision to a Total Career Continuum will reformulate reserve status as the norm and retain larger numbers of trained personnel who pursue civilian careers while remaining available to fulfill national security requirements for the majority of their working lives.

This proposal presents seeds for germination and cannot fully list the substantial changes required in law, policy, and attitude on career, retirement and the dual-status technician programs to bring the Total Career Continuum to fruition. I recommend further study and action to mobilize military and civilian leadership to direct action towards a fully integrated militia.

The Reserves bridge the American citizen with the active military encouraging an involved society who personally care about the military and are more likely to participate in public debate, support funding, and have increased confidence in national security policy. In her first testimony as secretary of the Air Force, Deborah Lee James addressed the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force saying, "I would like to see our Air Force 10 years from now be led by a chief of staff who has had major reserve component experience."<sup>41</sup> Now may be the precise time for revision of forces to achieve that goal, to project U.S. military power

when wanted and humanitarian intervention when needed, and maintain a broad portfolio of capabilities in the best interest of our nation's defense.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Ronald Folegman, "Going Back to the Future: Militia Model Could Cut U.S. Expenditures." *Defense News: A Gannett Company*. January 16, 2012. <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120116/DEFFEAT05/301160015/Going-Back-Future> (accessed November 11, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Heusden, Sgt. 1st Class Blair. "Florida National Guard celebrates 447 years of History." *Florida Guard Online*. September 14, 2012. <http://www.floridaguard.army.mil/280483> (accessed September 25, 2013). While the English militia tradition in the Massachusetts Bay Colony is credited with giving the National Guard its earliest organized regiments, the Spanish first brought the European tradition of militia – men liable for short terms of military service in time of war or domestic turmoil – to the new world at St. Augustine. From statement made by Florida National Guard Command Historian Greg Moore.

<sup>3</sup> John K. Mahon and Romana Danysh, "INFANTRY Part I: Regular Army." *Army Lineage Series*. April 15, 1971. <http://www.history.army.mil/books/Lineage/in/infantry.htm#1> (accessed November 7, 2013), 12-3.

<sup>4</sup> Michael A. Palmer, "The Navy: The Continental Period, 1775-1890." *Naval History and Heritage Command*. <http://www.history.navy.mil/history/history2.htm> (accessed December 11, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> John T. Corell, "Origins of the Total Force." Vers. Vol. 94, No. 2. *Air Force Magazine*. February 2011. <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2011/February%202011/0211force.aspx> (accessed November 7, 2013). Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird declared the "Total Force Concept" in an Aug. 21, 1970, memorandum to military departments, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and defense agencies. Reduced expenditures would require reductions in overall strengths and capabilities of active forces and increased reliance on combat and combat support units of the Guard and Reserves.

<sup>6</sup> *Legal Basis of the National Guard* [www.arng.army.mil/aboutus/history/Pages/ConstitutionalCharteroftheGuard.aspx](http://www.arng.army.mil/aboutus/history/Pages/ConstitutionalCharteroftheGuard.aspx) (accessed December 12, 2013).

<sup>7</sup> *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*. Washington D.C. office of the Secretary of Defense: Department of Defense, 5 January 2012, 5.

<sup>8</sup> Commission on the National Guard and Reserves. *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st Century Operational Force*. Washington D.C.: Final Report to OSD and Congress, 31 January 2008, 343.

<sup>9</sup> DoD currently uses at least 26 codes identified in *Department of Defense Instruction Number 1215.06*. "SUBJECT: Uniform Reserve, Training, and Retirement Categories." Washington, D.C., February 7, 2007, pg 28, to account for reserve personnel performing active-duty service. The Wexford Group Report account for up to 32 categories or status codes that are linked to the expenditure of funds for the active service of reserve personnel. There has been growing demand for reform from the Chief of the National Guard, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the individual Departments, and the States Adjutants General. The particulars of barriers and issues with duty status codes and utilization authorities go beyond the scope of this paper but are being researched in detail by multiple think-tanks and commissions. The Total Career Continuum proposal bases status on just four codes: Active Status–Federal, Active



Status—State, Reserve Status—Federal (Reserves), Reserve Status—State (National Guard).

<sup>10</sup> Age 60-67 depending on the year of birth.

<sup>11</sup> The life-time career would include longer duration assignment to a position (possibly 3-6 years) to build competency and observe the impact of changes/actions implemented. With the overall career twice as long, individuals can still advance through key positions and ranks to achieve senior management positions before retirement. This would also reduce the number of change-of-station moves and associated costs, especially if personnel can serve in multiple consecutive positions at the same unit or location.

<sup>12</sup> Travis Sharp and John Nagel, *An Indispensable Force: Investing in America's National Guard and Reserves*. Center for a New American University, 2010, 10.

<sup>13</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Martin E. Dempsey championed having armed forces officers work outside the armed forces via sabbaticals in Q&A on leadership development with Academy of Management Learning & Education Journal, October 17, 2011. The AF Career Intermission Program would allow active-duty up to 3 years break in service as non-participating Individual Ready Reserve without pay or allowances but still considered for promotion or advancement. They would serve at a 2-to-1 payback rate upon return to active-duty. It was posted to the CoSTT website and was listed as Behind Schedule, due for action May 31, 2011. Short-term conflicts include care for terminally ill family members, civilian academic advancement, religious requirements of missionary work, or cultural immersion in foreign countries. Long-term basis includes stability in education for children and developing civilian career skills.

<sup>14</sup> Congress currently establishes force levels annually. This proposal would redefine the categories for allocation of the quantities of personnel. Services would continue to define operational mission requirements to determine necessary quantity of personnel, but those numbers would include what are currently viewed as active forces in addition to the reserve augmentation requirement.

<sup>15</sup> PCS – permanent change of station. Personnel would be authorized paid relocation, if applicable, when transitioning from active to reserve status and from reserve to active status, just as they would from one active assignment to another.

<sup>16</sup> A Total Force Manpower Management Team would require cooperative development by all branches of Service and have representative membership from active and reserve units and leadership, possibly operating under the direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

<sup>17</sup> Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, “Reserve Affairs Overview” (May 2010), <http://ra.defense.gov/documents/Reserve%20Affairs%20Overview.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> A Contingency Dual Status Commander allows a single officer to command both Title 10 and 32 forces for unity of command during designated domestic contingencies but requires Presidential and state Governor specific approval. *Posse comitatus* restricts Title 10 forces but joint operating environments assign duties to T32 personnel and use T10 personnel for other functions in the same area causing confusion and may draw T10 forces unintentionally into an unauthorized role. NORAD T32/10 orders temporarily transition National Guard personnel to federal status when executing Air Sovereignty Alert or other federal Homeland Defense roles upon a triggering event and return them to T32 status when the event is no longer valid,

sometimes within minutes.

<sup>19</sup> Reserve professionals are prohibited from performing reserve-position-related training while on active-duty orders.

<sup>20</sup> Congress uses Military End Strength to limit the size of the Active Armed Forces, Selected Reserves and Dual Status Technicians. Although a fixed number is established annually by law, the accuracy of active forces employed is clouded by exclusions and conditions that affect the number of Reserve Component members counted against end strength. Workarounds have been employed to maintain Reserve manpower in active status to compensate for Active force shortfalls. At DoD's request, Congress created a new category in 2004 called Active Duty for Operational Support (ADOS) which consists of Reserve and National Guard personnel who volunteer to fill active-duty operational support shortages for up to three-out-of-four cumulative years without being counted against the end strength threshold established by Congress. ADOS manpower accounting is just one example of multiple workarounds and obscurations instituted by DoD and Congress that cloud the accounting and fiscal transparency of active military forces. The multiple authorities and statuses create confusion, frustration, and lack of transparency at all levels from the individual member to national fiscal accounting processes. The plethora of statuses, the public and fiscal laws, department policies and processes, and automated systems utilized to process and monitor the status of personnel all contain barriers to effective and efficient transitioning of personnel from reserve to active status and back. At the operational level, Service and unit administrators must determine the what appropriation, end strength rule, funding type, liability and USC authority is applicable to each order placing a reservist in active status to support an operational commander's requirement.

<sup>21</sup> John Christian, *An Overview of Past Proposals for Military Retirement Reform*. Technical Report, National Defense Research Institute, Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2006, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Lee A. Craig, "Public Sector Pensions in the United States." *EH.net Encyclopedia*. Edited by Robert Whaples. March 16, 2003. <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/craig.pensions.public.us> (accessed September 24, 2013), 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. "Newsroom Releases: An Older and More Diverse Nation by Midcentury." Census.gov. August 14, 2008. <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb08-123.html> (accessed November 1, 2013).

<sup>25</sup> Lawrence Kapp, "Military Technicians: The Issue of Mandatory Retirement for Non-dual Status Technicians." *CongressionalResearch.com*. March 20, 2000. <http://congressionalresearch.com/RL30487/document.php?study=MILITARY+TECHNICIANS+THE+ISSUE+OF+MANDATORY+RETIREMENT+FOR+NON-DUAL-STATUS+TECHNICIANS> (accessed January 19, 2014). P.L. 90-486; Statute 755; August 13, 1968.

<sup>26</sup> Dual-status Technicians are ineligible for TRICARE or TRICARE Reserve Select health insurance programs. Dual-status Technicians are typically exempt from mandatory retirement dates for their military pay grades and are retained past 20 years in their military position until reaching civil service retirement eligibility at age 60. As a result, one category of reservists already effectively operate in a pseudo Total Career Continuum paradigm, but at a significant security disadvantage relative to active service.

<sup>27</sup> National Guard Technician Equity Act, introduced to Congress by Representative Rob Andrews (D-NJ) March 17, 2011. <http://votesmart.org/public-statement/597876/introduction-of-the-national-guard-technician-equity-act#.UtxrVRDnZEY>

<sup>28</sup> "Military Retired Pay Overview." *Military.com*. [www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/military-retired-pay-overview.html](http://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/military-retired-pay-overview.html) (accessed November 1, 2013).

<sup>29</sup> "Military Reserve Retirement." *Military.com*. [www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/reserve-and-guard-pay/military-reserve-component-retirement-overview.html](http://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/reserve-and-guard-pay/military-reserve-component-retirement-overview.html) (accessed November 1, 2013). A significant recent addition to active service retirements was the lifting of the 75% cap by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007. Anyone retiring from active service after January 1, 2007 with more than thirty years of total active service accrues percentage increases for the additional years. As a result, retirees with over forty years of service would receive over 100% of base pay in their retirement annuity. Moreover, the only persons eligible to exceed forty years of service are general officers, some chief warrant officers and some prior-enlisted officers, hence the highest pay rates receive the highest percentage annuity irrespective of their follow-on second career income. Interestingly, disability and Extraordinary Heroism retirements still incur the 75% cap even if service exceeds thirty years.

<sup>30</sup> Designated correspondence courses accrue one point for three credit hours earned.

<sup>31</sup> "Military Reserve Retirement." Note: The retirement age is reduced by three months for every ninety consecutive days of mobilization since January 28, 2008.

<sup>32</sup> Proficiency training (PT) pay or other types of pay may be authorized for reservists completing ancillary training, other computer-based training, or authorized telecommuting workload.

<sup>33</sup> An example of an accrued service obligation would be required active service for a specified period of time after pilot flight training or other skill acquisition that incurs significant federal expense or is for a critical operational area to achieve sufficient return on investment.

<sup>34</sup> Elongated career timelines increase time in developmental positions to solidify skills and experience results of their efforts without sacrificing upward progress. Extended timelines also decrease the quantity of Permanent-Change-of-Station (PCS) moves and related expenses over the careers of officers and enlisted personnel.

<sup>35</sup> Grade can be highest held, high 36, or based on actual time in each grade held during the career depending on how complex and restrictive the laws are established by Congress to regulate the flow of funds. The annuity would be in addition to any Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), civilian 401K, or other civilian retirement savings contributions made by the service member throughout his/her career.

<sup>36</sup> Laura A.H. DiSilverio, *Winning the Retention Wars, The Air Force, Women Officers, and the Need for Transformation*. Maxwell AFB, Alabama: Air University Press, 2003, 27-36.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-9. In a survey conducted by DiSilverio, 64% indicated flexible job options and the ability to move between active and reserve components, 58% indicated non-punitive breaks in service, and 38% indicated home basing would significantly impact their retention decision.

<sup>38</sup> *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*. United States of America: Department of Defense, February 2010, 53.

<sup>39</sup> Martin Binkin, *Who Will Fight the Next War? The Changing Face of the American Military*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1993, 149-151.

<sup>40</sup> RAND. *Assessing the Structure and Mix of Future Active and Reserve Forces, Final Report to the Secretary of Defense*. Research, Santa Monica, CA: National Defense Research Institute, 1992, 94-97.

<sup>41</sup> Staff Sgt. David Salanitri. "Home: Featured Items: Front and Center: New Secretary Testifies to Commission on Total Force." *AF Portal*. January 10, 2014. <https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/ep/contentView.do?contentType=EDITORIAL&contentId=c2D8EB9D642E99B8801437D7C13A61083&channelPageId=s6925EC1356510FB5E044080020E329A9&programId=t2D8EB9D62D713923012DA5B706290B7E> (accessed January 14, 2014).



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